

REPORTS

Zhivaia Starina in 2017

At the start of 2018, *Zhivaia Starina* journal changed ownership and is currently being published by Polenov Russian State Folk Art House (Moscow). The journal's key topics for 2017 involve the role of tradition and innovations in folklore genres and the interconnection between folklore and folk mythology as well as between folklore texts and oral history. Additionally, Issues 3 and 4 feature sections to commemorate the 870th anniversary of the founding of Moscow and the centenary of the Russian October Revolution.

Issue 1

The first issue opens with the section "Genres of Folklore: The Folktale", which includes papers on the practice of recording fairy-tales (A. S. Lyzlova's paper on the first audio recordings of fairy-tales from the 1940s (currently stored in the archive of Institute of Linguistics, Literature and History of Karelian Research Centre, RAS) on V. E. Dobrovol'skaia's comparative analysis of Slavic and Baltic versions of SUS 425M (the husband-serpent) along with V. V. Zaporozhets' text of the same type, recorded in the Krasnodar region. The other papers in the section present recent field research from the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries in the Volgograd region (V. A. Shilkin) and in the Yaroslavl region (V. E. Dobrovol'skaia).

The section "Folklore Texts: Old and New" focuses on comparing traditional elements and innovations in different folklore genres and forms: epic folklore (a paper by N. V. Petrov about Russian *bylinas'* transformed since the 19th century under the influence of other genres), syncretic song-and-dance forms (M. V. Stroganov's paper on contemporary solo song and dance), and children's folklore (E. G. Matveeva's article about transformations of children's "scary stories"). M. O. Garder studies how Soviet-era folkloristics understood the genre of *bylichka* [memorat], and presents a survey on problems of terminology in folkloristics.

The section dedicated to dream symbols in folk culture includes papers on zoosymbolics in oral and literary traditions of dream interpretation (in an article by A. V. Gura, based on a huge amount of Slavic material), on the texts of bedtime prayers intended to provide good dreams (O. V. Chokha's paper about Greek spells mentioning Maria Magdalene), and also field reports, i. e. narratives on prophetic dreams, dreams about the other world, and dreams about God and the saints, recorded in the Krasnodar region (V. V. Zaporozhets) and in the Mogilev region (O. V. Belova) and the Gomel region of Belarus (G. I. Lopatin).

The section "Folklore studies in Research Centers" features papers written by the research fellows from Barents Center for the Humanities (Kola Science Center, Russian Academy of Sciences, Apatity, Murmansk region). It opens with the review of the Center's studies (by I. A. Razumova). The papers address

shamanic legends of the Sami living on the Kola Peninsula (O. A. Bodrova), the social life of things in the urban culture (O. A. Suleimanova), and a reflection on the folklore and oral history of church-building (A. S. Davydova).

The section “Archive Shelf” includes a paper by A. V. Pigin and A. S. Sokolov, who present an analysis of the Soviet “*Bylina* about the Tubozersky Kolkhoz” written by the Karelian epic singer N. V. Kigachev in the 1930s; the text, which exposed disorder in the kolkhoz, was declared subversive, and the author was arrested as a result.

The “Expeditions” section contains two papers. N. G. Golant’s field report on rites of the Passion and Easter Weeks was recorded among the Romanian subethnic group in the Eastern Serbia; Iu. A. Krashennikova and S. G. Nizovtseva present a field report on the calendar rites, nicknames, household rites, folk medicine, and spells, of the Troitsko-Pechorskii district of the Komi Republic.

Issue 2

The second issue opens with a section titled “Paleofolklore.” The first paper, authored by S. Iu. Nekliudov, explores what paleofolklore is. According to Nekliudov, oral sources of literary works can be detected through typological reconstruction, determining structural and semantic parallels and likening the literary monuments and themes to fabulas and motifs from the oral narrative tradition. The method is illustrated in the reconstruction of the cultural contexts of the Ancient Egyptian tale “About Truth and Lie.” The Egyptian theme continues in E. G. Tolmacheva’s paper about the concept of “the soul as a bird” as seen in the Ancient Egyptian mythology. Iu. E. Berezkin analyzes widespread motif-types, such as the “Difficult Task,” by using mapping and statistical methods. Employing the same methods, D. S. Nikolaev distinguishes widespread and rare motifs and discusses their role in the context of the global folk tradition. The remaining articles explore the lunar myth in Early Japanese culture (L. M. Ermakova), the figure of the Hairy Maiden in Medieval Chinese texts (A. B. Starostina); F. B. Uspenskii uncovers the semantics of the name *Sigrfluga* (lit. ‘Fly of Victory’) featured on the King of Norway Sverre’s banner according to Scandinavian epics.

The section titled “Language of Folk Culture” includes papers on cultural semantics of Russian dialect, lexicon, and phraseology. S. Iu. Koroleva and E. A. Kliukova present variants of the folk psalm “Theotokos’ Dream” in material from the Iurlinsky district of the Perm region. O. A. Teush reviews metaphorical terminology for whirlpools as found in dialect dictionaries. M. B. Gekht and S. I. Pogodina discuss pejorative utterances (from teasing to invectives) addressed to the “the other” on the basis of material from Latgale (Latvia), where the Russian, Latvians, Latgalians, and Jews used live side by side.

The section “The Northern Mosaic” focuses on different aspects of material and spiritual culture of Northern Russia and includes material from field studies, museums, and private collections: a paper on the art of *basmas* (ornamented

metallic plates from icons) in Karelia (V. P. Ershov); biographical data on female folk singers recorded during expeditions to Mezen (in the Arkhangelsk region) in the 20th century by S. A. Butovskaia and A. S. Semenova; and narratives about witches in the Koigorodsky district of the Komi Republic by P. A. Istomina.

The paper by E. A. Chaiko, published in the section “From the History of Scholarship,” contains a field report on folklore and ethnographic expeditions of 1947–1955 to the Southern Urals, which were carried out under the direction of the famous Russian folklorist V. E. Guseva. The field diaries of the participants contain material on traditional costume and weaving, traditional and contemporary celebration, and old and new forms of social life.

In the section “Exhibitions,” S. V. Vorobieva and Zh. V. Gvozdeva review an exhibit dedicated to the everyday life of Northern Russian peasants — epic singers. It coincided with the 215th birthday of famous Russian epic singer Trophim Riabinin (1801–1885) and was on display at the Kizhi State Open-Air Museum of History, Architecture and Ethnography in Petrozavodsk from March through July of 2016.

The “Expeditions” section presents recent field research recorded in Karelia (a paper by Iu. V. Litvin and S. A. Minvaleev about an expedition to the Lyydiköt, a Karelian subethnic group, which followed the trail of a 1950s ethnographic expedition), while a paper by I. S. Butov, V. N. Gaiduchik and V. S. Aleksinskii on mythological narratives about unsuccessful black magicians and devilry in Belarus. The release of photographs of Nekrasov Cossacks taken by Iu. F. Lunkov in the 1980—1990s, with a preface by V. N. Nikitina (Medvedeva), coincided with the 55th anniversary of the return of a large group of Nekrasov Cossacks return to Russia in 1962.

The journal celebrated the 70th anniversary of the archeologist, anthropologist, and ethnologist Iurii E. Berezkin, author of a database of world’s mythologies (text by A. S. Arkhipova). The memorial section was devoted to the Estonian folklorist Arvo Krikmann, a friend and contributor to *Zhivaia Starina*, who passed away in 2017, February 27th.

Issue 3

The key section of the third issue is “On the 870th anniversary of Moscow” and contains materials on Moscow archaeology (a paper by L. A. Beliaev about archaeological finds on the site of Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich’s 17th-century palace in Kolomenskoe and in Red Square, and also a note by V. A. Berkovich about another Moscow find: clay brick from the Soviet period with the text of an obscene *chastushka* carved into the brick before firing); on Moscow necropolis studies (a paper by N. G. Propirnyi and A. S. Iashin about 20th-century lyric epitaphs found in Moscow cemeteries); and on memoirs describing Moscow at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries (M. V. Akhmetova and T. V. Zhgilëva published a fragment of schoolwork written in 1899, where a pupil from a rural school in the Novgorod Province depicts his 3-year life in Moscow; our editorial

team published a fragment of memoirs written by a Moscow teacher N. V. Kolotukhina (1891—1984) and currently stored in the editorial archive).

The section “Folk Religion: 20th—21st Centuries” contains papers on the world’s popular religious traditions, on the creation of new cults influenced by traditional models of sacred personages and objects. I. S. Butov presents archive and field research on the legend of the miraculous self-renewal of roadside crosses in Belarus of 1930s—1950s. K. Ogannisian, L. Avetisian and L. Simonian discuss cults of sacred places in Armenia along with the folk religious practices concerned with the sacred places (Tukh Manuk, St. Stepanos Nakhavka, Nakhavik and Ishkhanavank). L. M. Ermakova analyzed the origin and function of modern Japanese cult *Pokkuri*, whose elderly followers believe that the deity *Pokkuri-san* will help them to pass away without suffering and spare their relatives from having to nurse them if they become incapacitated.

Authors in the section “Animals in Folklore” analyze different aspects of folk zoosymbolics in traditional culture of Slavs and their neighbors. A. V. Gura explores the folk taxonomical classification of animals through criteria such as ‘pure—unclean’, ‘wild—domestic’, ‘male—female,’ etc., in Slavic material. O. V. Belova’s work features the motif of animals’ miraculous transformation (when a sacred character punishes, curses, or rewards an animal, or a human turns into an animal or a plant). V. S. Kuznetsova discusses an etiological “folk biblical” motif explaining the origin of the forked swallow’s tail. K. A. Kozhanov and A. V. Chernykh analyze Romani (Kalderash) beliefs and practices concerning the frog as a magic talisman. M. M. Makartsev discusses Albanian and Macedonian beliefs about a cuckoo and its first cuckooing.

The research fellows of the Russian Museum of Ethnography (O. G. Baranova, L. S. Gushchian, M. A. Dokuchaeva, et al.) in the “Exhibitions” section present the museum’s exposition “Tea and Coffee, with(out) Ceremonies,” which took place from April through September 2016 and explored different ethnic traditions and rituals of tea and coffee-drinking. The publication was accompanied with photographs from the museum’s archive.

In the “Expeditions” section, E. A. Samodelova published narratives about Efim Chestniakov (1874—1961), an artist, a writer and a philosopher, who lived in the Kostroma region and was considered to be a clairvoyant by the peasants. V. A. Shilkin presented field materials from the *khutor* Ozerki (the Ilovinskii district of the Volgograd region) including narratives about traditional food, calendar rites, demonology and childlore. The journal also remembered Xenia M. Bromley (1937—2017), the well-known Russian ethnomusicologist.

Issue 4

The fourth issue opened with the section “Regional Folklore: Russian—Belarus Borderland,” the latest installment the journal’s long-established exploration of regional and local traditions and their typology. Four papers are based on field studies in the Zlynkovskii district of the Bryansk region (Russia) on the border with Belarus: the tradition of bearing a cross in burial processions and

its annual transfer (A. B. Moroz); taboos and prescriptions concerning *Grianaia Week*, a period during Pentecost (V. A. Komarova); narratives about witches and witchcraft (N. D. Petrova); and summer calendar rites (D. K. Vyskrebentseva). Two additional papers are based on material from other areas on the Belarusian border: E. M. Boganeva analyzed beliefs concerning mythological characters such as ‘invisible people,’ legends about their origin and their relationships with humans (including matrimonial), and G. I. Lopatin presented field research on calendar rites, folk Christian beliefs and demonology. Lopatin’s material was recorded in the village Staubun in the Gomel region.

“Beliefs and Rites” contained papers on regional rain-making rituals in the Diveevskii district of the Nizhny Novgorod region (Iu. M. Shevarenkova) and in the Volgograd region (V. A. Shilkin); on the wedding rites in a Ukrainian enclave in Bosnia and Herzegovina (G. P. Pilipenko); and on ritual bread in matchmaking rites of Cossacks who had settled in the historical territory of the First Don *okrug* [county] (T. E. Grevtsova).

The section “Folklore and Revolution” was dedicated to the centenary of the Russian October Revolution and introduced papers reflecting on the corresponding crisis epoch in folklore, oral history, memoirs and naïve peasant literary texts. M. V. Stroganov studies field records from the Kalinin / Tver region in the 1970s—2000s, and analyzes changes in informants’ attitudes toward the Russian Revolution and Civil War. M. V. Akhmetova published three peasant poems, attested in the 1930s, that reflect some notable social signs of the new epoch. S. M. Tolstaia published a fragment of the memoirs written in the 1990s by Vera I. Tolstaia (1903—1999), the granddaughter of Leo Tolstoy; the text discusses the tragic events of the first half of the 20th century, including the Revolution, Civil War and the Emigration. Closely related material is found in an article on the oral memoirs of the famous Russian linguist V. A. Dybo by A. S. Krylova. Dybo’s narrative deals with his father Anton T. Dybo, the academician whose autobiography was written in the 1970s.

The “Expeditions” section contains two papers. K. V. Osipova analyzed spring calendar rites of baking *zhavoronki* [skylarks] cookies in the North-Eastern part of the Kostroma region. V. E. Dobrovol’skaia presented materials on calendar rites, wedding and funeral rites, mythological narratives, and legends from an expedition to the Kimrskii district of the Tver region .

Maria V. Akhmetova, PhD (Cand. of Science in Philology),
The Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public
Administration,
Deputy Editor-in-Chief of *Zhivaia Starina*

Olga V. Belova, PhD (Doctor of Philology)
Institute of Slavic Studies, Russian Academy of Science,
Editor-in-Chief of *Zhivaia Starina*